

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya calls for accelerated talent identification to build India's 2036 Olympic athlete pool

SAI's 63rd Governing Body Meeting focuses on talent scouting, coaching and expansion of sports infrastructure

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Taking forward Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of a nationwide sports talent hunt from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya today called for an accelerated and comprehensive talent identification roadmap to build India's athlete pool for the 2036 Olympics.



Chairing the 63rd Governing Body Meeting of the Sports Authority of India (SAI), Dr. Mandaviya emphasised that the groundwork for India's sporting ambitions over the next decade must begin now. "The plan for the next 10 years before we see the Olympics being hosted in the nation has to start in full swing right from this moment," the Hon'ble Minister said.

In line with the Prime Minister's call to identify and nurture sporting talent across the country, Dr. Mandaviya said SAI must strengthen its talent scouting mechanism and put in place a structured system for identifying athletes with the potential to progress to the highest level.



“Talent identification should happen in two distinct stages: first, identifying athletes who are performing well at the state and district levels, and then mapping those athletes to assess their potential and determine whether they possess the fitness, passion, dedication and ability to progress to the next level,” he added.

He said talent identification should cover the entire sporting pyramid, including schools, districts and colleges. “The aim should be to build a comprehensive talent repository that can subsequently feed into sports schools and higher-level training systems,” he mentioned.

Dr. Mandaviya further emphasised the need to develop a public-private partnership (PPP) model to expand the training ecosystem. Under such a framework, athletes identified through State and district-level talent hunts could be channelled to suitable academies for specialised training.

He also underlined the important role of the corporate sector in expanding sports development through greater CSR participation. Such partnerships would help augment the country’s training capacity beyond government-run facilities and create a wider network of academies for athletes emerging from the talent identification system.



As part of efforts to strengthen the coaching ecosystem, the Governing Body approved the establishment of the National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB). The NCAB, a key component of the revamped Khelo India Scheme, will provide a more structured framework for coach accreditation and development.

The Governing Body also approved a proposed amendment to the recruitment rules for appointment to the post of Assistant Coach (Pay Level-6) on deputation basis in SAI.

Emphasising the need to maintain momentum in the development of India's sports ecosystem, Dr. Mandaviya said, "There are lots of developments happening and we have to sustain this speed and we have to move three times to steadfast our sports projects."

He added that rising expectations from the government and growing interest in sports among Indians required the country to accelerate its efforts. "We have to fulfil the new vision for a new generation and we need to maintain that," Mandaviya said.."

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